



The Journal



April - June 2016

'Q'

By Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, BC



Many Biblical scholars have accepted the likelihood of the 'Q' document as a major source of the Gospels. In summary, the living Jesus of Nazareth was first accepted as an eschatological prophet by those who heard him proclaim the immanent "near at hand" God's Kingdom. This was the faith of Jesus' first followers, and it supported the expectation that when God's rule was established, God would rescue i.e. save the faithful "from the test." (eis peirasmon Q/Lk 11:4; Mt 6:13) This belief was not in the OT but was maintained in the

Lord's Prayer (likely as part the of the Jerusalem Jesus group's apocalyptic prophetic tradition after the death of Jesus).

Echatological prophets were considered dangerous by the watchful Judean authorities; Jesus was executed by these authorities because in life he was such a prophet proclaiming the coming kingdom of God and denouncing the irreligious ways of the religious establishment. (Q Lk 11:42; Mt 23:23) Jesus followers continued his work of proclaiming God's Kingdom. Those who accepted his message would be spared the cleansing suffering that would come at the eschaton (the end time) when Jesus would "come again to judge the living and the dead: Maraan atha" (1 Cor 16:22; 1 Thess 1:16); 1 Enoch 1:15 "to convince the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds..." See also Jude 1: 14-) This Parousia was a continuation of the Judean belief spoken of by Daniel and it became the mission of the Jesus disciples.

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The Journal welcomes submissions from small faith communities and individuals that share its vision of the Christian Church as one in which all are equal, decisions are made by consensus, healthy relationships are nurtured, justice is done, and the Good News of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.

All submissions to the Journal must be received by February 15, May 15, August 15, and November 15.

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See the back page for further details.

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Almost every theophany (revelation of God) begins with the same warning: "Do not be afraid." Fear is an entirely predictable response to any God encounter because any authentic experience of the Absolute relativizes everything else. Faith is actually quite wild and dangerous. A vast majority of people have left the search entirely, finding most religious people to be fearful conformists instead of adventurous seekers of Mystery and Love.

Richard Rohr OFM

Year Of Mercy - A Thought Or Two

by *Emil Kutarna, Regina, SK*



Last December Pope Francis proclaimed a Year of Mercy. The Feb.3/16 issue of the Prairie Messenger quotes Pope Francis saying: "**Let the Year of Mercy be the time to end all family feuds, to forgive each other and let bygones be bygones**".

Here is a true story as an example: Dr. Wayne Dyer was a university professor and writer (he died just last

August). He said that his dad abandoned his mom and three boys when he was very young, so he spent his childhood in orphanages until he was ten years old. He hardly knew his dad but he held this hatred for abandoning him and his two brothers. Now as a grown man he went to visit his father's grave. He had so much anger in him that for two hours he sat there cursing his dad.

Finally he got up to leave. As he was walking back to his car at the cemetery, something clicked inside of him. He turned, walked back to the grave and knelt down. Suddenly the tears came pouring out as he let go of his hate. He forgave his dad. When he got up to leave, he cried out "I love you, dad. Dad, I love you".

He said that he felt a great weight lifted from his shoulders. That burden of hate had weighed down his heart all those years.

(Got a computer? listen to him tell his story):

<http://www.thetappingsolution.com/2016VideoSeries/wayne-dyer/>)

A Time to unload

I think we all must admit that there are people in our lives that we **need** to forgive, yes, even if they are dead, as in Dyer's story. This is not only good religion, it's also good sense. Old wounds fester as we know, so why keep them? They only add to the sadness in our lives, and we have enough of that, don't we?

Pope Francis asks us to remember that there is **no limit to God's mercy**. There is nothing so bad that God has not already forgiven us. Now we are reminded to do likewise and forgive all who have hurt us no matter how long ago, and whether living or dead.

Forgiving - just make a start

So how do we go about forgiving?

We need to start where it's at - in our minds.

That's how Dr. Dyer did it. His dad wasn't there for him to see or hear, but his dad was in his memory. So he had to think in his mind, "Dad, I forgive you". So we can do the same: think of a person, dead or alive, who hurt you, and *in your mind*, say to that person, "I forgive you". You may need to repeat it a number of times, and if you are alone and can say it out loud, that's even better. Then at some point you will know that you really have forgiven. That is the start. As my dad used to say in Polish "Już zaczęte, jeno skończyć" 'already begun, only to finish'.

Sometimes we expect too much of ourselves. I believe that if many of us did just this one thing of forgiving even one other person, we would experience a more peaceful heart.

Fear Of The Stranger

By *Hank Mattimore, San Jose, CA*



"Just as the human need for hospitality is a constant, so, it seems, is human fear of the stranger" Ana Maria Pineda

I was taking a walk to the local market the other day when I crossed paths with a middle aged woman carrying groceries back from the

store. I did not know her but, people person that I am, I wished her a cheery good morning. She never looked up and passed me by neither answering my greeting nor, in any way, acknowledging that she and I were on the same planet together, not to mention the same neighborhood. Apparently, in her eyes I was a stranger, someone to be feared or at least not trusted.

In this particular case, the woman might have been deaf or her mind was elsewhere but I have had similar experiences before and, in talking to friends, they too have been given the silent treatment by perfect strangers. What's going on? Have we become so fearful of other people that we are afraid to say hello?

Is it ironic or what that in a culture eager to share our intimate secrets on facebook and other social media outlets, we are becoming less and less willing to talk to one another directly? Good grief, we are even afraid to shake hands with one another without subjecting ourselves to some kind of anti-contaminant. We are becoming a "no touch, don't talk to strangers society."

Author Ana Maria Pineda suggests, that our traditional openness to people and new ideas is being smothered by fear of the stranger. Insulated and isolated by our self constructed silos we are building a fence around ourselves keeping the immigrants, people of color and others who are perceived as somehow different than ourselves at bay.

C'mon folks, our world, as you may have observed, is far from perfect but most people are not ogres ready to pounce on others. Honest. Your neighbor is not your enemy but a friend who wants to live in the same kind of peace and harmony you want for yourself. People who speak a different language or have a different color skin are not aliens from space but fellow human beings.

Nah! We don't need to have love-ins on every block but it might help to recall to mind one of Maya Angelou's signature quotes, "We are more alike than unlike." Not a bad thing to keep in mind next time some "stranger" wishes you good morning.

Radio Progreso, Honduras

by Phil Little, Cedar, BC



My posts this year will be less travelogue and more reflection on what is happening here and how I struggle to understand it all. A few have written to ask if I am OK as my posts are less frequent. I assure you that I am fine and being cared for as the senior citizen at the Radio station.

The last weekend was particularly wonderful as I was with a young couple and their little 2 year old. It was family time and I felt that I was very much a part of their lives. In all the problems faced by this country, I have also found an openness and generosity among the people I meet who are somehow connected to the radio or to ERIC. Sharing the daily tortillas and beans is significant for me, and probably healthy. Before coming I had months of digestion difficulties, but since coming back to Honduras I

have had no problems. Is it what I am now eating or perhaps what I am no longer eating - such as bread and milk.

However fresh cheese is part of the daily diet, so milk is not totally eliminated. I do eat well enough - a typical meal includes tortillas, black beans, fresh cheese and scrambled eggs.

Sometimes there is fresh avocado and papaya. At the noon meal there is often some chicken and occasionally fish (tilapia). Ah yes, and very infrequently dessert. So I am receiving many hugs in the morning when I return to the radio station at 7:45 and I am eating healthy. So please don't worry!

Today is the official day to pay tribute to the "Honduran journalist", almost every profession has its official day. So obviously there were special greetings for the journalists who work on the inside and the

outside of the business. While even the government paid tribute to journalists, the reality is quite different.

There were threats today that the military would enter the TV station to remove all the equipment. Similar threats have been made against other small community radio and tv stations that remained independent of government censorship. Radio Progreso to my knowledge has not received any explicit threats at this time.

Far more effective in controlling the press is the use of death threats. An independent radio station, Radio Dignidad, has received repeated threats against two main journalists and broadcasters. To make sure the government's position was clear, it sent 50 special unit military police to the home of one of the journalists to search the premises and photograph every corner of the house and property while a helicopter flew low overhead. Both journalists have officially been given special "protective" measures by the Inter-American court but that obviously is a directive to the state and cannot force the state to comply. As with Berta Caceres who also had been awarded protective measures, this means very little when the military are acting on behalf of the government.

In a situation similar to that of Berta Caceres, another Lenca woman, Ana Miriam Romero, has received death threats because of her leadership and opposition to another hydro-electric project called Los Encinos. Ana has previously been severely beaten by paid thugs

(military), even when she was pregnant, and most recently she was stopped and threatened by four masked and armed men.

On Friday I was watching my "comadre" Jennifer editing the trailer for a new documentary being made by the audio-visual team of Radio Progreso. This documentary is

titled "Guardian of the Rivers" and it is about Berta Caceres. In one clip a Lenca woman, perhaps about 30 years old and nursing a baby while being interviewed, was seen. Jennifer told me that this woman was a supporter of COPINH and Berta Caceres. Thugs came to her house one night to intimidate her and frighten her off. They cut off four fingers from one hand and the ear of one four year old child. The murder of Berta Caceres and other leaders of the indigenous movement COPINH was just the high point in years of repression and



Radio Progreso, Honduras Continued...

grotesque brutality in a country where impunity is guaranteed to police, military and gangs (and where the boundaries between these groups is no longer very clear!)

Honduras, after Haiti, is the second most impoverished country in the Americas. That is different than saying "poorest" as Honduras has always been a country rich in resources. However the resources are claimed by the powerful who also have the backing of the military, and the rest of the country is "made poor" or impoverished. One of the symptoms of this poverty is the cost of living. A British group called MoveHub did a ranking of American countries looking at what a family of four would need in terms of basic or primary goods considering only food to survive. Honduras was ranked as the most expensive country in the Americas for the basic food needs for a family of four. Even a family income of double the minimum wage was insufficient to simply feed a family of four without consideration of other necessary expenses.

Loansharking is the main business of the banks now. A bank loan can carry interest payments higher than 60%. A flyer left at the door of the house offered short term loans. A loan of L.8000 was offered with 36 bi-weekly payments of L.390. That works out to almost 75 % interest. Other sums were also quoted, but as people get desperate they turn to these quick loans thinking that next month things might get better. That is when the enforcers arrive to collect on unpaid loans. This type of financial exploitation is really criminal, especially when dealing with a people who are living on the edge and very unsophisticated in financial matters.

One change that is concerning is a move by the government to criminalize the presence of national or international human rights

defenders working in Honduras. This comes from a demonstration in the capital city where an Italian-German human rights observer was present and taking photographs of the brutal military intervention. The government responded in its official press attacking her as the organizer of the protest, trying to shift blame from its own actions. Bro. Rene Flores, the head of the Franciscan order in Honduras, issued a statement of grave concern about these efforts of the government to now shift its criticism to human rights workers, who are present with those sectors being oppressed and attacked by the government. Again as with the case of Berta, she would be just another "dead Indian" among thousands if it were not for her recognition in the country and especially in the international community for her environmental and human rights struggle. So the good side of this is that the government is acknowledging that the presence of international observers does make a difference and that in their presence the government (military and industrial partners) are not as free to simply do what they want. Accountability is always a problem for governments - here or in Canada!

One last thought - Last week as I was preparing to leave for the radio station at 4:15 am, I saw something move on the floor under my small desk. On my hands and knees I was able to realize that I had a moderate sized tarantula to deal with. I tried to do my St. Francis thing and with a broom and dust pan tried to get it to move so I could take it outside. My intentions were misinterpreted by the furry 8 legged creature, so in the end I managed to neutralize it with a broom handle and then take it outside. I did feel bad about that but I felt that if I left it until I returned, it would not have waited in the same spot.



Máxima Acuña

Thanks to Katherine Martinko, Goldman Environmental Prize Group

Máxima Acuña: an unlikely match between a 47-year-old Peruvian subsistence farmer and a giant American mining corporation

One of the much-anticipated winners of the 2016 Goldman Environmental Prize, the world's largest prize for grassroots environmentalism, has been announced. Her name is Máxima Acuña, a 47-year-old grandmother and subsistence farmer from the Andean highlands of northern Peru. For many years, Acuña and her husband lived a quiet, peaceful life. In 1994 they purchased 18 acres of land located at the edge of Laguna Azul, a high-altitude lake that provides drinking water to the family, livestock, and neighbors downstream. There they raised their children, tended sheep and cows, made cheese from the milk, lived off potatoes and other vegetables they grew, and occasionally made the distant trek into town to sell dairy products, vegetables, and woolen handicrafts. But everything changed in 2011 when the Peruvian government granted a 7,400-acre concession to Newmont Mining Corporation, an American mining company. The concession included Acuña's property which Newmont needed in order to access Laguna Azul. Its plans for the new Conga Mine included draining the lake and converting it into a tailings pond to collect the toxic mining byproducts, such as cyanide and arsenic. Acuña refused to give up her land. Instead, she became a fierce environmental activist, fighting to defend her land from the takeover and destruction that she knew would be inevitable. Despite never having learned to read or write, Acuña launched herself fully into the battle against Newmont and the Peruvian government. Newmont took Acuña to court and won a lawsuit in 2012 that accused her of squatting on land that was not rightfully hers. At that point, Acuña enlisted the help of GRUFIDES, a local non-governmental organization that provides assistance to rural communities fighting mining

companies. The group advised Acuña to take the case to a higher-level court in order to appeal the verdict; she did so by walking a ten-hour and often treacherous hike to make court appearances. She won in 2014 when the court overturned the original verdict, preventing Newmont from proceeding with the mine development. State police, hired as private security contractors, have threatened to evict her, built a fence around her land to restrict movement, razed her home twice and stolen belongings, and destroyed her potato crops. Once she and her daughter were beaten unconscious when they tried to intervene.

The battle is not over yet, but Acuña continues to hold her ground, refusing to give in to Newmont's bullying. Organizers of the Goldman Environmental Prize state:

"She has become widely known throughout Latin America for her inspirational courage in standing up against a multinational mining company. The Conga mine has not moved forward. The community has rallied behind Máxima and her victory has brought new life to the struggle to defend Cajamarca's páramos, water supplies, and people from large-scale gold mining."

In a region of Peru where half the land has been granted to extraction projects, Acuña's strength and determination to protect the land and a traditional way of life are deeply important. She sets a precedent for other grassroots activists and inspires others to stand up to this destructive industry. She is living proof that even the smallest voice, if sufficiently stubborn, can make a huge difference.



Máxima Acuña, a grandmother and subsistence farmer from Peru

What Are The Struggles Facing Catholics Today?

by Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, BC



[http://
www.ronrolheiser.com/
columnarchive/?
id=894](http://www.ronrolheiser.com/columnarchive/?id=894)

In April 2012, Fr. Ron Rolheiser OMI listed ten major faith and church struggles of our time, at least as he then saw them. He was

answering a challenge that National Catholic Reporter John Allen Jr. encouraged Rolheiser to attempt in order to identify the faith and ecclesial struggles that many people face today. As I read Rolheiser's list, I heard many voices of people who express similar difficulties with religion and God. In today's secular world, many people who say that they have no religion struggle, nevertheless, to have "a vital sense of God, to be conscious of God". They may say that they are atheists. Often, when I ask them to tell me about the God that they do not believe in, I can tell them that I do not believe in that God either. One cannot explain God. One can say that God is uncreated Creator; God is uncreated Wisdom/Word; God is uncreated Life-giver. Early Christian leaders expressed their (inexpressible) faith experience of God with words such as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These names show that the contact of tyne first followers of Jesus with God was concrete, immediate, familial, relational, and definite. These are just a few of the struggles listed by Fr. Rolheiser OMI that face today's catholics.

Over the centuries Christians have recited, sung, and revised in the compline prayer "Te Lucis ante terminum, rerum Creator poscimus, ut pro tua clementia sis praesul et custodia" to the "Pater omnipotent, per Jesum Christum Dominum regnat cum Sancta Spiritu". (Before the end of the day, Creator of all things, in your kindness be our guard and keeper...all powerful Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ, who reigns with the Holy Spirit.") The trinity of names was the way that Christians have held fast to the one God of their faith experience, coequal, coeternal, consubstantial in functions and not in modes of being.

However, faith statements (beliefs or Confessional statements) are at best inadequate faith expressions, and often in themselves lead to dogmatism. Without good familial or relational life experiences, it is very difficult to have faith in (the triune) Christian God, Edward Schillebeeckx says: "Rejoice and do not be dismayed./ For God to whom we pray./ is close and in our midst today."

In a culture that lays emphasis on individuality, it is difficult to find the right mix of looking after one's self and taking care of those who have no way of taking care of themselves. Today's biblical "poor" seldom recommend christians for initiative action on their behalf; one's own "security trumps compassion and truth... doctrine trumps justice... liberal or conservative trumps correct action". The lonely

are left alone. There is little community to share available food and not just to eat while watching others go hungry.

Two key reasons for the drop off in today's religious practice (With Thanks to Marcus Borg)

One reason for the decline in participation in the life of community (Catholic and Protestant church gatherings) has been commented upon by many. Western visions of the good life are largely about enjoying ourselves. These images dominate Western advertising, movies, television, and media in general. They are largely about achievement, affluence, and appearance.

Another reason is that what we might call "common Christianity" of the recent past has become unpersuasive to many people in traditionally Christian cultures. Common Christianity took for granted that Heaven and hell (and purgatory) were the primary reason for being christian and going to Heaven; sin and forgiveness are the primary issue in our life with God; Jesus is the means of forgiveness; "progressive Christianity" offers an alternative. Christianity is not about "eternal salvation" but about transformation in this life - ourselves, the humanly constructed world of politics, economics, and conventional systems. Christianity is not the only way of transformation but it is one of the great religions. Jesus taught and embodied the character and passion of God. Jesus rejected the powers of domination that ruled his world. Easter is about God's affirmation of what Jesus was about. Christianity is about participation in God's and Jesus' passion for transformation. Strikingly, in a poll published in July 2013, 28% of American Catholics identified as "progressive".

In 2014, The International Theological Commission (ITC) addressed the *Sensus Fidei* in the life of the Church. It examined this topic in itself and in Scripture and in Tradition. The ITC states in its introduction "By the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father' and bears witness to the Son (Jn 15:26), all of the baptised participate in the prophetic office of Jesus Christ, 'the faithful and true witness' (Rev 3:14). They are to bear witness to the Gospel and to the apostolic faith in the Church and in the world. The Holy Spirit anoints them and equips them for that high calling, conferring on them a very personal and intimate knowledge of the faith of the Church. In the first letter of St John, the faithful are told: 'you have been anointed by the Holy One, and all of you have knowledge', 'the anointing that you received from Christ abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you', 'his anointing teaches you about all things' (1Jn 2:20, 27).

As a result, the faithful have an instinct for the truth of the Gospel, which enables them to recognise and endorse authentic Christian doctrine and practice, and to reject what is false. That supernatural instinct, intrinsically linked to the gift of faith received in the communion of the Church, is called the *sensus fidei*, and it enables Christians to fulfil their prophetic calling... It is clear, therefore, that the *sensus fidei* is a vital resource for the new evangelisation to which the Church is strongly committed in our time... the *sensus fidei* refers to two realities... the proper subject of one being the

What Are The Struggles Facing Catholics Today? Continued...

Church, while the subject of the other is the individual believer, who belongs to the Church through the sacrament of initiation, and who, by means of regular celebration of the Eucharist, in particular, participates in her faith and life. On the one hand, the *sensus fidei* refers to the personal capacity of the believer within the communion of the Church to discern the truth of faith (*sensus fidelium*). On the other hand, the *consensus fidelium* is a sure criterion for determining whether a particular doctrine or practice belongs to the apostolic faith, to a communal and ecclesial reality: the instinct of the faith of the Church herself, by which she recognises her Lord and proclaims his word.... The *consensus fidelium* is a sure criterion for determining whether a particular doctrine or practice belongs to the apostolic faith.

The importance of the *sensus fidei* in the life of the Church was strongly emphasised by the Second Vatican Council. Banishing the caricature of an active hierarchy and a passive laity, and in particular the notion of a strict separation between the teaching Church (*Ecclesia docens*) and the learning Church (*Ecclesia discens*), the council taught that all the baptised participate in their own proper way in the three offices of Christ as prophet, priest and king. In particular, it taught that Christ fulfills his prophetic office not only by means of the hierarchy but also via the laity. In the reception and application of the council's teaching on this topic, however, many questions arise, especially in relation to controversies regarding various doctrinal or moral issues. What exactly is the *sensus fidei* and how can it be identified? What are the biblical sources for this idea and how does the *sensus fidei* function in the tradition of the faith? How does the *sensus fidei* relate to the ecclesiastical magisterium of the pope and the bishops, and to theology? What are the conditions for an authentic exercise of the *sensus fidei*? Is the *sensus fidei* something different from the majority opinion of the faithful in a given time or place, and if so how does it differ from the latter? All of these questions require answers if the idea of the *sensus fidei* is to be understood more fully and used more confidently in the Church today.

The phrase, *sensus fidei*, is found neither in the Scriptures nor in the formal teaching of the Church until Vatican II. However, the idea that the Church as a whole is infallible in her belief, since she is the body and bride of Christ (cf. 1Cor 12:27; Eph 4:12; 5:21-32; Rev 21:9), and that all of her members have an anointing that teaches them (cf. 1Jn 2:20, 27), being endowed with the Spirit of truth (cf. Jn 16:13), is everywhere apparent from the very beginnings of Christianity. The voices of lay people are heard much more frequently now in the Church, sometimes with conservative and sometimes with progressive positions, but generally participating constructively in the life and the mission of the Church. The huge development of society by education has had considerable impact on relations within the Church. The Church herself is engaged worldwide in educational programmes aimed at giving people their own voice and their own rights. It is therefore a good sign if many people today are interested in the teaching, the liturgy and the service of the Church. Many members of the Church want to exercise their own competence, and

to participate in their own proper way in the life of the Church. They organise themselves within parishes and in various groups and movements to build up the Church and to influence society at large, and they seek contact via social media with other believers and with people of good will. The new networks of communication both inside and outside the Church call for new forms of attention and critique, and the renewal of skills of discernment. There are influences from special interest groups which are not compatible, or not fully so, with the Catholic faith; there are convictions which are only applicable to a certain place or time; and there are pressures to lessen the role of faith in public debate or to accommodate traditional Christian doctrine to modern concerns and opinions. It is clear that there can be no simple identification between the *sensus fidei* and public or majority opinion. These are by no means the same thing. The *sensus fidei* is obviously related to faith, and faith is a gift not necessarily possessed by all people, so the *sensus fidei* can certainly not be likened to public opinion in society at large. Then also, while Christian faith is, of course, the primary factor uniting members of the Church, many different influences combine to shape the views of Christians living in the modern world. The *sensus fidei* cannot simply be identified, therefore, with public or majority opinion in the Church, either. Faith, not opinion, is the necessary focus of attention. Opinion is often just an expression, frequently changeable and transient, of the mood or desires of a certain group or culture, whereas faith is the echo of the one Gospel which is valid for all places and times. In the history of the people of God, it has often been not the majority but rather a minority which has truly lived and witnessed to the faith. The Old Testament knew the 'holy remnant' of believers, sometimes very few in number, over against the kings and priests and most of the Israelites. Christianity itself started as a small minority, blamed and persecuted by public authorities. In the history of the Church, evangelical movements (often) started as small groups treated with suspicion by various bishops and theologians. In many countries today, Christians are under strong pressure from other religions or secular ideologies to neglect the truth of faith and weaken the boundaries of ecclesial community. It is therefore particularly important to discern and listen to the voices of the 'little ones who believe' (Mk 9:42).

I have to add that neither Vatican II nor the new Code of Canon Law (CIC) which depended on and followed (1983) the Council did not make clear the meaning of Collegiality in Church law nor Church practice. Church structures have not been amended by these two major Catholic institutions to bring new understandings of *sensus fidei* nor Collegiality into practice. This failure has caused many struggles and divisions in human relations within and without the Church. The complete text (4 chapters and notes) of the ITC document http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20140610_sensus-fidei_en.html, and of Quo Vadis?, Collegiality in the Code of Canon Law by Mary McAleese are worth close reading.

Excerpted From St. Brigid's Newsletter

By *Monica Kilburn-Smith, RCWP, priest/pastor of St. Brigid's, Calgary, AB*



From the Newsletter of St. Brigid of Kildare Catholic Faith Community of Calgary a place for anyone who wishes to experience the love of God through a praying, worshipping, and caring faith community. It is a place of welcome, joy, support, exploration and love for those who desire to participate in the growth and renewal of the Roman Catholic Church.



Hearth Keeper Prayer

Brigid of the Mantle, encompass us,
Lady of the Lambs, protect us,
Keeper of the Hearth, kindle us.
Beneath your mantle, gather us,
And restore us to memory.
Mothers of our mother, Foremothers strong.
Guide our hands in yours,
Remind us how to kindle the hearth.
To keep it bright, to preserve the flame.
Your hands upon ours, Our hands within yours,
To kindle the light, Both day and night.
The Mantle of Brigid about us,
The Memory of Brigid within us,
The Protection of Brigid keeping us
From harm, from ignorance, from heartlessness.
This day and night,
From dawn till dark, From dark till dawn.



Pope Francis hugs Sister Carmen Sammut, a missionary sister of Our Lady of Africa, at the Vatican on May 12. The pope said he was willing to create a commission to study whether women can be deacons in the Catholic Church, signaling an openness to letting women serve in ordained ministry currently reserved to men.

AP

All across the Mediterranean, early Christian frescoes and bas reliefs carry the names of women deacons and even bishops — such as Phoebe, Helaria, Ausonia, Euphemia and Theodora.

Yet in 1994, Pope John Paul II not only decreed that women are definitively excluded from the priesthood, he even banned all discussion of the topic.

Pope Francis broke that taboo last month when he announced he would create a commission to study whether women can serve as deacons as they did in early Christianity.

RELIGION

Pilgrims Trace Women's Role in Early Church

Seizing this new sign of openness, supporters of a female priesthood converged on Rome this week, to coincide with the Vatican's Jubilee for the all-male clergy.

Marinella Perroni, a theologian and New Testament scholar who teaches at a Pontifical College in Rome, was one of the participants on a panel. She recalled that John Paul's 1994 edict even urged students to report errant teachers.

"In Rome, several professors were denounced to the congregation of the doctrine of the faith," she said. "This had immediate consequences on their right to teach and it led to paralysis."

Excerpted From St. Brigid's Newsletter Continued...



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Posters touting the Women Priests Project along a wall.
Sylvia Poggioli/NPR

Father Tony Flannery, whose support for women priests was one reason the Vatican suspended him from public ministry, also took part in this week's discussion. He rejected the claim that since Jesus' disciples were male, only men can minister the sacraments in *persona Christi*, or "in the person of Christ."

"Now that is such a ridiculous argument," he said. "In fact, that argument has its rightful place back at the time of the flat earth and the persecution of Galileo."

Panelist Jamie Manson, columnist and book editor at the National Catholic Reporter, said a female priesthood would be an important signal in a world where women suffer disproportionately from violence, poverty, lack of education and trafficking.

"Imagine if a church of one billion people, with this charismatic, rock star pope, suddenly said to the world, that women are equal to men," Manson said. "Imagine the power that would have over cultures across the world, where this patriarchal idea of women's subservience to men is at the root of all that women suffer globally."

the organizers of the unofficial jubilee of women priests gathered in the shadow of St. Peter's dome in their first official public demonstration in this city.

There are some 150 women worldwide who function as priests, in defiance of the Catholic Church. They perform baptisms and weddings and celebrate mass in house churches.

But after Pope Benedict issued a decree in 2010, all those women were automatically excommunicated from the church.

Some of those pioneering women priests also came to Rome this week, and they scored another first.

Janice Sevré-Duszynska, who was ordained by a bishop in Kentucky in 2008, says she and another woman were received by an official in the Secretariat of State, one of the Vatican's top departments.

"We talked to a wonderful priest, we were able to give our letter to Pope Francis, our petition to lift our excommunications and stop all

punishments against our supporters as well as begin a dialogue with women priests," she said.

While we spoke, police officers approached. A policewoman in civilian clothes asked, "You're here to promote the role of women in the church? To let women become priests like men? Put them on an equal footing?"

When asked what she thought about this, she laughed and said, "Oh, I'm just a police officer."

But it does seem the policewoman went out of her way for this group. She and her men escorted the protesting women all the way into St. Peter's Square, where Pope Francis was preparing to celebrate mass for thousands of ordained male priests.



Janice Sevre Duszynska ARCWP and Christina Moreira ARCWP

holding banners at first public demonstration allowed by the Vatican on Friday, June 4, 2016

Bridget Mary's Response: A Warm Reception by the Vatican!

Another surprise and historic first in addition to the warm reception by a Vatican prelate of the petitions of support for women priests, Janice Sevre Duszynska, ARCWP and Christina Moreira ARCWP along with members of the Women's Ordination Worldwide Coalition were escorted into St. Peter's Square! I rejoice at the Pope Francis effect opening doors that were previously shut at the Vatican!

Bridget Mary Meehan
ARCWP, www.arcwp.org



Corpus Canada

WHO ARE WE?

We are a faith community of men and women empowered by our baptism in Jesus' Spirit to reach out to others in their need as Jesus did. We also provide support for married Roman Catholic priests, their family and friends.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

This faith community is dedicated to

- Renewal of ministries in the Church, including an ordained ministry open to men and women, married and unmarried;
- A vision of Church that includes all people who profess faith in Jesus Christ;
- Development of leadership among all the baptised in the Church;
- Promotion of a wholesome view of sexuality;
- Justice for all based on Gospel values.

Our message is a healing one and is directed to everyone, especially the marginalized in the Church. It is our hope to reach people through many ministries, and in a special way through the creation of small faith communities.

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

Through a collegial approach based on consensus reached through communal discernment in the Spirit, we share our gifts that all creation might be transformed according to God's loving plan.

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Thank you for your support of this Christian ministry.

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